

SOUNDS OF SALEM

A MONTHLY PRINT AND DIGITAL NEWSLETTER OF SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VENEDOCIA, OHIO

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PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? Turn and answer me, O LORD my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, "We have defeated him!" Don't let them rejoice at my downfall. But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. I will sing to the LORD because he is good to me (Psalm 13:1-6 NLT).

Many of us in Salem Church have perhaps lost close loved ones, lost our health, or lived through personal struggles or tragedies. Through this, all of us have at one time, or another wondered, "Where is God when heartbreak takes place." One of the most troubling experiences is to have to face an overwhelming life trial seemingly alone while having a strong feeling that God isn't there for us in our pitch-dark hour.

Perhaps, you walked through a valley of suffering feeling alone with no signs of God anywhere? You think that God doesn't care what you are undergoing. It seems like God is there for everyone but you. So, we seemingly go through lonely valleys of isolation. It is only by faith that we have to hold onto God when it seems He isn't there.

But, realize that God has been, is, and always will be there for you.

God is there even when you don't sense His presence. God doesn't always act in the way and in the timeframe when you want Him to act. It is because His divine plan is more amazing than we can ever imagine. He promises us that "God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them" (Romans 8:28). We trust in God, not earthly treasures. Our security is in heaven. Knowing that helps us to accept the pain that this world unleashes on us. The All-Powerful God uses the bad to make good out of it. Don't also forget that He goes with us through the pain.

It is rare to understand the reason for your suffering while in the middle of it.

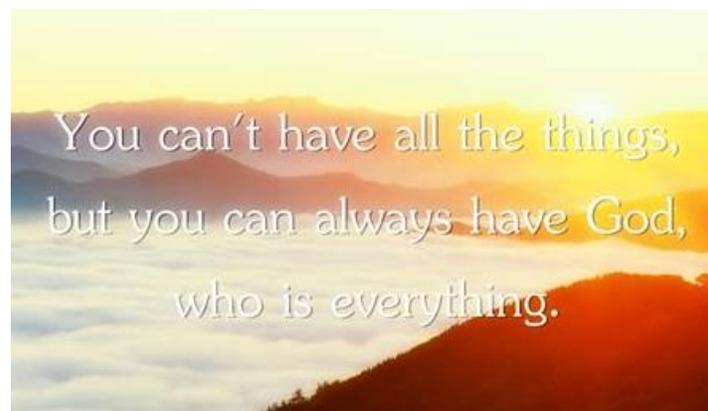
If God explained the reason for our suffering and how good will come out of it, He would have to explain billions of lives and centuries of generations and how they are related. Our minds could not comprehend Him in explaining our circumstances. All we can do in the end do is to trust in the Goodness of God until we get to heaven to ask Him personally.

God's purposes are always good.

God's ways are perfect, and His love for us is without limit. Can an ant explain the ways of a human? So too, we cannot explain God's ways.

Finally, we learn by faith to run to God, and not away from Him. We learn from Psalm 13 that it is "OK" to struggle with and to doubt God, but not to fall into the deception of denying God's existence; Psalm 14:1 tells us that, "Only fools say in their hearts, there is no God." God wants you to know He loves you beyond what you can imagine and to trust in Him alone. He has amazing blessings for you. Even when you walk through the darkest valley, do not be afraid, for He is close beside you. His rod and His staff protect and comfort you (Psalm 23:4).

Pastor Tom Emery



Everything

Today I'm counting on a new beginning with a reason for living with a deeper meaning because God has blessed me with many good things. I have been through a lot, but with God's help, I have been able to overcome my adversities.

God is and always will be my everything.
 He has been my light in my darkest hours.
 He has pulled me from the fire more times than I can count.
 Now I'm surrounded by the comfort and protection of the highest power.
 I love you and praise you, Lord Almighty.
 You are my strength and my song.
 You walk with me in this journey that seems so long, but with you by my side, surely everything will be alright.
 For I know goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life
 I thank you and I love you forever more.

"Everything" by Leiby Acosta © April 2011

The Book of Ephesians (4:17-32)

As believers, we are called to live out our new identity in Christ with a lifestyle that is different from the world and different from our pre-Christian past. In this passage, Paul begins with a strong, urgent exhortation (encouragement).

Paul calls Christians to live no longer like the surrounding pagan culture. Since Ephesian believers entered a new relationship with Christ, they are to "walk the line." They are to walk worthy of the calling with which they have been called, to devote their lives to their Savior. In verses 17-19, Paul reminds the Ephesian Christians (and us) that before we came to Christ, our minds, feelings and actions were bleak, meaningless and foolish. Regarding the heart, Paul says the unbelievers are "excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts" (vs 18). They have had opportunities to respond to the good news, but they refused repeatedly. As a result of this dead, hardened and callous heart, they lack moral restraint. Left to ourselves, we are a vile people. And even though some may seem less vile, all are still in desperate need of Christ.

The Good News in this passage is that God can transform anyone by His grace! Many in the Ephesian church matched this dark description, but they became New Creations; as can we. The point is clear: As New Creations in Christ, we are to think differently, respond to the truth differently and act differently from the pagan culture. God enables us to live holy lives by His Holy Spirit. This is not to say that you should never be around unbelievers. You should! But as Jesus demonstrated, our goal is to be separate from sin, even though we must not be isolated from unbelievers.

How do I live as a New Creation? Paul explains this in the next verses (vs 20-24). First, Christianity is about knowing a living person, Jesus Christ. When you became a Christian, you do not merely learn about the teaching of Jesus; you develop a relationship with Him. Paul warns about false teachings. Then as now, we need to learn about the *real Jesus*. Next, Paul says "to put off," "to be renewed" and "to put on." In other words, since we have taken off the old life and have put on the new life, we must put away sin daily and continually. We must live differently since we are new people. Now through Christ, we are re-created into His image. Lastly, Paul tells us to remember we are a New Creation. Renewal is an ongoing process God performs in us. We need a continual renewal of our minds. (Being in God's Word daily is one way to accomplish this.)



How do I live out my new identity?

Only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we begin to replace our sinful habits with righteous and holy habits. In verses 25-32, Paul speaks of relational behaviors. We are to change the way we live in community with others. Our sin affects others negatively, just as our righteousness will bless others positively. Holiness is not just about saying no to sin; it

is also about saying yes to God. We must not only throw our dirty clothes in the hamper; we must put on the new suit as well!

Replace lying with truth-telling. Your words greatly affect the whole body. Since we are united together, false words hurt the whole body. Falsehood stifles unity; truth strengthens unity. When you tell the truth, you are imitating God. When you tell a lie, you are imitating Satan.

Replace unrighteous anger with righteous anger. Righteous indignation is a holy anger against sin. Paul is not giving us permission to throw a fit, seek revenge or dishonor the name of God in public. He also explains not to let your anger fester. Resolve it quickly. Even "good anger" can lead to problems like bitterness and unforgiveness.

Replace stealing with working and giving. Do honest work with your own hands and share with those in need. Work is a gift from God. Even Jesus was a carpenter/stone mason.

Replace corrupt talk with edifying talk. Corrupt talk comes from a corrupt heart and includes unkind words, slander and gossip. Jesus says on the final day, we will give an account for every careless word we say. Speak encouraging words and build each other up.

Replace bitterness and rage with kindness and forgiveness. Should there be consequences for actions? Sure. But just as Jesus forgives us, we are to be a kind and forgiving people.

So, what do you wear? Have you come to know Christ? Are you dressed in His righteousness? If so, live out your new identity as a New Creation in Christ for the good of others and the glory of God.

Source "Christ-Centered Exposition" by David Platt (used in the Salem Women's Bible study).

Security in a World Falling Apart

Do you ever feel like the world is cracking and beginning to crumble? Riots, Coronavirus, Chinese aggression, ISIS, changing sexual morals, disintegrating families, escalating crime, drugs, suicides.... I don't need to elaborate. The world is shaking. It's passing away. But believers in Jesus need not fear or be depressed, for God has given us an unshakeable kingdom.

²⁸ *Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.* ²⁹ *For our God is a devouring fire* (Hebrews 12:28–29 NLT).

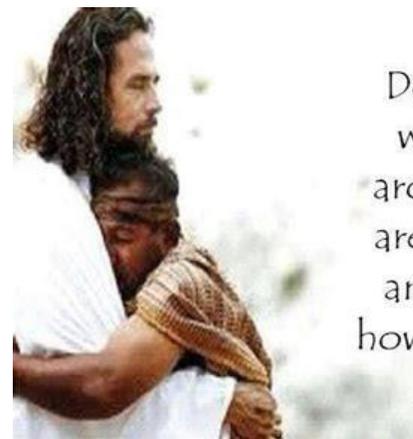
Live for the unshakeable kingdom

This world and everything in it is going to pass away. But we are receiving a kingdom that is permanent. It will last forever. It can't be destroyed, let alone shaken. This means that everything we do for that kingdom will last. All we invest in that kingdom is secure. It won't devalue; no one can steal it; it's there, and it will be there when we get to [heaven](#). Every act of kindness we do in the Name of Jesus, every glass of water we give a thirsty person, every dollar we give to the church or the poor, every meal we make for a family in need, every time we babysit for a friend—safe. Permanent. Every prayer we offer, every song we sing, every time we praise Jesus, every act of obedience—stored away in the unshakeable kingdom. In light of the unshakeable kingdom, why would we live for this world? Why would

we give ourselves to sin and selfishness? Why would we spend all our time pursuing things that are fading, aging, crumbling and passing away?

Be thankful

The author of Hebrews says that since we are receiving a permanent kingdom "let us be thankful." How can we not be thankful that Jesus rescued us from lives of futility and gave us eternal life in his kingdom? How can we not be thankful for an unimaginable glorious future? Let's make thankfulness one of the main habits in our lives. Yes, we should thank God for all our material blessings, but let us thank Him for the incredible blessings of the kingdom—the righteousness of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, God's love in Christ, God's protection from evil, his strength to conquer sin... innumerable spiritual blessings.



Dear Lord, please
wrap your arms
around those who
are hurting today,
and let them feel
how much You love
them.

Ask God for grace

The phrase "let us be thankful" is often translated from the Greek "let us have grace." [Hebrews 4](#) tells us that in our weakness when we face temptations, we should boldly approach the throne of grace for "grace to help in time of need." Jesus is waiting to give us His mighty power to overcome temptation.

Have a healthy fear

Since we are receiving an unshakeable kingdom, we should "worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." This isn't just talking about our "corporate worship" when we gather with the church to sing and celebrate, but our lives. We are to offer God holy lives. We should live "with reverence and awe" or with a healthy fear of the Lord. We don't want to take God's holiness and majesty for granted. We don't want to presume that we can sin and God won't discipline us. We don't want to give in to sin. Remember "God is a consuming fire." The author of Hebrews is referring to Deuteronomy 4:23–24:

Take care, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make a carved

image, the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

God warned Israel, that though they were his chosen people and He would bring them into the promised land, they must be careful not to fall into idolatry, because He would punish them. God doesn't take sin lightly. Nadab and Abihu didn't fear God, and offered different incense than God had commanded:

Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD (Leviticus 10:1-2).

This doesn't say that Nadab and Abihu went to hell. It says that fire came out from the Lord and consumed them. They ruined their lives in this world by their disobedience. In [Acts 5](#), Ananias and Sapphira, who it would appear were believers, lied to Peter about money and God struck them down. The result was that "great fear came upon the whole church" (v. 11). Obviously, God doesn't always consume us when we sin. He is patient, long-suffering, and merciful. But we shouldn't presume on that mercy. A healthy fear of the Lord will help us live holy lives that are pleasing worship to God.

We who have believed in Jesus are receiving an unshakeable kingdom. Let us be practice being thankful, let us seek His grace to overcome sin, and let us cultivate a healthy fear of God. That's a recipe for joy!

Adapted from "4 Ways to Live in a Crumbling World," by Mark Altrogge, Bible Study Tools

Salam Graduates for 2020



Andrew Emery
University of Cincinnati School of Engineering



Chance Mosier
Lincolnview High School



Shania Profit
Lincolnview High School

Coronavirus Update

Unfortunately, because of the Coronavirus regulations, we are sadly not able to have the Gymanfa Ganu in September unless the circumstances of the Ohio health regulations change. The Ice Cream Social has been postponed; more details will be forthcoming. At this time, the Spencerville Summerfest celebrations and the Van Wert County Fair are unclear about their dates being cancelled or rescheduled.

Our new Facebook pages are: "**Salem Presbyterian Church Venedocia**" for our Facebook Live Sermon posting, and the Group Page is "**Salem United Presbyterian Church**" for spiritual churchwide discussions. Our shortrange FM station is **FM 87.9** for the Venedocia area.

Church Financial Update

Before the pandemic hit Salem Church, we were doing financially better than last year at this time. With church services being suspended by the State of Ohio, we need more than ever for our church family to continue their giving during this trying time. Church offerings should be mailed to the church at:

**Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894**

Needed to Date: \$43,753.13
Received to Date: \$46,169.61

Salem Sights



May 10th – Marilyn Foust and Elizabeth Adkins at the Mother's Day church opening according to Ohio regulations



May 17 - Ione Owens' 90th birthday party drive-by with friends and family including her twin sister, Leone.



Salem Music: May 24th - Dave Van Tilburg and Sheila Collins; May 31st - Seth Baker



May 31 – Confirmation of Keaton Adkins, Ashlyn Price, Jackson Dunlap, and MaKenna Kimmet



May 31st – Rev. Thomas Emery offers Communion in uniquely packaged wafer and wine mini-containers for the sanitary safety of Salem's Service. The tripod used for Facebook Live recording is shown in the foreground.



May 31st – Eric, Jenny, Madison, and Isaiah Pugh playing Special Music Bells

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Remember our elderly members, soldiers, and college students with cards and visits.

Bartie Jones

407 Stony Ridge Dr.
Sandusky, OH 44870-5468

Marjorie Rhoades

Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Marian Morris at Hearth & Home

1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati – Graduating

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

Madison Pugh – USCGA | 15 Mohegan Ave.
8785 Chase Hall | New London, CT 06320

Condolences

Condolences to the families of Dave Cook and Marilyn Beamer (stroke)

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

(U.S. Coast Guard)
311 Oak Street #109
Oakland, CA 94607

Micah Linger

Grandson of Doris Evans
(U.S. Marine Corps)

Phoebe Eutsler (Army)

Birthdays

2 Barb Owens	4 Chad Pugh
6 Cassy Emery	8 Tammy Wells (Lloyd)
10 Dillon Ellerbrock	11 Doris Evans
13 Kevin Price	14 Sandra Caffro
18 Charlie Good	22 Ann Rees
25 Tamara Mullenhour	29 Tom Evans
30 Shania Profit	

Anniversaries

2 Ron & Barb Owens	14 Jeff & Kim Coil
17 Bill & Elgarda McGee	22 Todd & Jayne Morris
24 Owen & Karen Pugh	25 Rex & Lisa Lloyd
28 Larry & Sandra Caffro	

Prayer Concerns

Connie Bassett (breast cancer)
Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)
Warren (Punkin) Burnett
Barry Coil (stroke)
Kathy Comer
Amy Cunningham (Fibromyalgia)
John Davis (stroke)
Cathy Donnal (health issues)
Kent DuCheney (surgery)
Aiden Ellerbrock (serious injuries from a fall)
Betty Ellis (rapidly failing health)
Catie Emery (nightmares)
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Tim Huster (cancer)
Connie Johnson (cancer)
Jan Jones (health issues)
Paula Jones (healing from fall)

Dale Kiesza (leg operation)
Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
Linda Lissey (cancer)
Bob Louth,
Jr (prostate health)
LuAnn (family issues)
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Tom Menker (cancer)
David Morris (Zeb)
Marian Morris
Terry Profit
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)
Marjorie Rhodes
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Julie Sheets (cancer)
Doug Smith (Jen Pugh's father)
Mary Strayer (cancer)
Martha Jean Evans Vasquez
6 Mike Wolverton

June 2020

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7pm Women's Bible Study	3	4	5	6
7 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	8	9 7pm Women's Bible Study	10	11	12	13
14 9:30 Worship Graduate Recognition 10:45 Sunday School 5:00 Trustee Meeting	15	16 7pm Women's Bible Study	17	18	19	20
21 Father's Day Recognition 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Session Meeting	22	23 7pm Women's Bible Study	24	25	26	27
28 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	29	30 7pm Women's Bible Study				

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
June 7	Bob & Denise Pugh	Liz Hobbs	Becky Reichard
June 14	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	Liz Hobbs	Becky Reichard
June 21	Bill & Ruth Evans		Connie O'Neill
June 28	Eric & Jenny Pugh		Dave Van Tilburg
Ushers	Ron Richards	Greeter:	Ron Richards

Salem Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894



May 24th - Sheila Collins Special Music.

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: www.SalemChurch.cc

www.facebook.com (Page is being renamed)

Secretary E-Mail: Secretary@SalemChurch.cc

Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131

Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

June 2020 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B	
Trinity Sunday – June 7	
Gen. 1:1-2:4a	Psalm 8
2 Cor. 13:11-13	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday after Pentecost – June 14	
Gen. 18:1-15 (21:1-7)	Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Rom. 5:1-8	Matt. 9:35-10:8 (9-23)
3rd Sunday after Pentecost – June 21	
Gen. 21:8-21	Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
Rom. 6:1b-11	Matt. 10:24-39
4th Sunday after Pentecost – June 28	
Gen. 22:1-14	Psalm 13
Rom. 6:12-23	Matt. 10:40-42